

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS:

The following claim set replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-10. (canceled)

11. (currently amended) A tray for sample vessels, comprising:
an upper surface with a plurality of orifices arranged in respective matrix configurations of four orifices forming a square, wherein each of the orifices accommodates one sample vessel and comprises two straight planar positioning walls which ~~define a positioning corner forming~~ form a right angle and define a positioning corner, wherein each positioning corner of an orifice in a matrix configuration establishes a respective corner of the square, and wherein ~~each of the orifices includes~~ the orifices include a planar flexible support wall positioned at a center of the square of each respective matrix configuration so as to be located opposite to the positioning corner of the orifice, the flexible support wall having an upper edge, two lateral edges and a lower edge, the upper surface of the tray joining the upper edge of the support wall, wherein the flexible support wall of the orifices elastically presses a sample vessel inserted into the orifice towards the positioning corner thereof, and wherein ~~each of the orifices has~~ have at least one planar side wall joining a lateral edge of a respective flexible support wall to a lateral edge of a respective one of the positioning walls.
12. (currently amended) A tray as defined in claim 11, in which each of the orifices ~~orifice~~ is provided with a separate support wall.

13. (previously presented) A tray as defined in claim 11, in which the positioning walls, the at least one side wall and the flexible support wall of each orifice encircle the orifice peripherally.
14. (currently amended) A tray as defined in claim 11, in which the flexible support wall is inclined towards a center ~~the centre~~ of the orifice.
15. (currently amended) A tray as defined in claim 11, wherein orifices at an outer edge of ~~[[the]]~~ a respective matrix configuration include outwardly directed positioning walls.
16. (currently amended) A tray as defined in claim 15, in which the outwardly directed positioning walls ~~[[((10))]]~~ of the orifices located at the outer edge of a respective matrix configuration join each other ~~[[,]]~~ thereby forming a continuous periphery ~~[[((14))]]~~ around the matrix configuration.
17. (cancelled)
18. (currently amended) A tray for sample vessels comprising:
multiple ~~square~~ orifice arrays, ~~wherein each orifice array consists comprised of~~
four orifices arranged to form a square, and wherein each of the four
orifices in an orifice array has a positioning corner which establishes a
respective corner of the square, and wherein
each of the orifices in the orifice arrays is defined by a pair of planar positioning walls joined to one another along an edge thereof to define ~~[[a]]~~ the positioning corner, and wherein
each of the orifice arrays includes a pushing means positioned centrally in the
orifice array for elastically pushing a sample vessel inserted into an orifice
in a direction toward ~~a respective one of the positioning corners~~ corner
thereof at a respective corner of the square, wherein the pushing means

includes planar elastic support walls each positioned in opposition to a positioning corner of a respective orifice in the orifice array.

19. (previously presented) A tray as in claim 18, wherein each of the orifices includes at least one planar side wall having lateral edges which join a respective one of the positioning walls to the support wall thereof.
20. (previously presented) A tray as in claim 18, wherein each of the orifices includes a pair of side walls, each of the side walls having lateral edges joining respective ones of the positioning walls to the support wall thereof.
21. (previously presented) A tray as in claim 20, wherein respective positioning walls, side walls and a supporting wall are joined to one another so as to define a periphery of each orifice in the orifice array.
22. (previously presented) A tray as in claim 19, wherein the at least one side wall has an inwardly bent free edge which defines the support wall.